The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 30, 1910, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C. under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 12, 1918.

WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1719 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 34, NO. 12

FACING the FACTS
With PHILIP PEARL

This is the story of a great American. Her name is Mrs. Paul Szymanski. She is a member of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and she is employed by the American Lady Corset Company at Detroit, making parachutes.

Mrs. Szymanski had seven sons. Two have died for their country, one in India, another in Africa. Four others are serving in the armed forces. Her youngest boy, Harold, has a few months to go before he joins the Army Air Corps.

We are indebted to "Justice," official organ of the ILGWU, for the story of this frail, grey-haired war mother who is a little bewildered at the attention that has been showered upon her. She feels she has done no more than should be expected of an American citizen. Let us see.

She was born in Detroit and until she was placed aboard a train for Washington recently she had never been outside Wayne County. Her husband has been in a hospital for more than a year.

"I Keep Up All Right"

Her employers say she is one of the best of the sewing operators. She rises each morning at 5 o'clock and sees that Harold gets ready for school. She is at her machine at 7 o'clock and she works until 3.

Then she returns to her home at 7685 Helen Avenue and does her house work, prepares the dinner and when the dishes are washed she sits down to write to her boys, the boys who are in Africa, Europe, California and one whose only address is "Overseas."

The letters done, she cooks things that can be sent to the boy in California—cookies and cakes he loves so well. It is late when she finishes her tasks and that leaves few hours in which to sleep.

"I keep up all right," she said. "I'm just doing what anyone can do. I don't see why anyone should be interested.

"I have lost two boys and I pray each night that the war may end and the others come home.

"Raymond didn't die right away. Before he died he told his captain he knew he was going to die and he wished—he wished someone would kiss his mother for him—I guess that's why the President kissed me. He knew about it.

Kissed By The President

"I've never been away from Detroit before. I was so—so green about traveling. But the Red Cross looked after me. I was one of 57 Gold Star mothers who met the President—mothers from all over the United States. It was comforting to talk to him. I don't seem to be able to remember what he said—just that moment when he kissed me—just a touch of the lips on my cheek. I can't ever forget that, of course.

"My oldest boy, Leonard, is in Africa. Robert, who's a sergeant, is overseas and so is Tony. Arthur is a Marine. Edward died almost two years ago in Africa—I have pictures of their graves—their buddies sent them.

"When Harold goes I'll be all alone. But I'll keep things going so when they come home there will be a home to come to and—What? Bonds? Of course, I bought bonds in every drive, including this one. I couldn't let my boys down."

Mrs. Szymanski's name may be hard to spell and even harder to pronounce. But she is the kind of American we of the labor movement can well be proud of. She is doing her job. She is doing her best to win the war regardless of sacrifices. She is not letting anyone down. May she be spared further suffering!

Million New Homes Needed Each Year In Post-War Decade, Survey Finds

New York City.—America's post-war demand for housing probably will exceed a million units per year for the first ten years after the firing stops and should bring employment and production in the home-construction and related industries up to levels "in excess of anything accomplished in the past."

This is one of the central findings of a major survey of the entire field of American housing, its problems and prospects, soon to be issued by the Twentieth Century Fund. The research was directed by Miles L. Colean, architect, who resigned his post as Assistant Administrator of the Federal Housing Administration to conduct this survey.

The Twentieth Century Fund's report finds present-day housing as a whole "is in an extremely deteriorated condition." In urban areas, more than 23 per cent of all dwellings had no private bath in 1940 and over 10 per cent were in need of major repairs. In the rural communities these percentages were considerably higher, and on farms higher still. Of the houses either needing major repairs or without private bath, 6,200,000 were in urban areas, constituting almost 29 per cent of the urban supply. Disregarding the lack of private baths in rural areas, 4,300,000 houses, representing over 27 per cent of the rural supply, were in need of major repairs.

Commenting on these figures the report says:

"These deteriorated, underequipped, out-of-date houses represent a demand for replacement and repairs that might become effective if the price structure and efficiency of the house-building industry were geared to realities.

"Considering only population pressure, on the one hand, and existing badly deteriorated housing, on the other, 820,000 nonfarm units a year is a minimum estimate of the potential demand for new housing during the postwar decade. During the '20s the ratio of new nonfarm dwellings to net additions in number of families to every new war contracts and have sought civilian production instead" because they were fearful "of being tied up in a lot of red tape in the event of war termination."

"The situation "augurs ill for the inevitable period of transition from war to peace," it added.

Commenting on post-war problems, the subcommittee said that 8,000,000 workers would be laid off from war jobs, and that excess supplies in the hands of the Government would total at least $50,000,000,000. In addition, more than 2,500 Government plants, built at an estimated cost of $15,000,000,000, would be released, it said.

"It is clear that the only thing to take the place of the war contracts is the purchasing power of the people and of our fellow nations throughout the world," it said. "To put it another way, all programs intended to adjust our economy to the removal of war contracts, upon which it now rests in large part, must be aimed at developing domestic and foreign markets to a level that has never before been known or dreamed of."

"It is possible for the demobilization program to be planned in such a way that our total output of goods and services during the transition period fails to be less than $135,000,000,000 a year. It is entirely feasible for us to aim at $200,000,000,000 a year or more within five years after the end of the war."

Fenton Pledges Navy Bridge of Ships

Washington, D. C.—Leading spokesmen of labor and management gave pledges to build a "bridge of landing craft" for the Navy to spearhead the United Nations' drive to victory.

Commemorating the second anniversary of the Amphibious Forces, a group of 18 labor and management representatives of the landing craft industry visited various east coast training bases and were "shipmates" of the Navy aboard an LCI-L (Landing Craft Infantry, Large) on maneuvers in the Chesapeake Bay.

They returned to their plants and other organizations impressed with the vast job that lies ahead in providing the thousands of various types of landing craft, their component and replacement parts, for the big invasion yet to come.

Lt. Comdr. S. M. Cox, executive officer at the Camp Bradford, Va., Amphibious Training Base, told the group, grimly:

"You build the ships and we will train the crews. We need these ships and we need them badly."

He received a prompt, enthusiastic response.

Frank Fenton, Director of Organization, American Federation of Labor, said:

"We will build a bridge of landing craft which our brave soldiers and sailors will cross to victory. It is the policy of the AFL to push landing craft production to the limit, with no strikes. Our pledge to the Navy is given."

Other AFL representatives who participated in the inspection trip included Lewis G. Hines, legislative representative of the AFL, and Eric Peterson, general vice president, International Association of Machinists.

OPA Again Yields To Price Gougers

Washington, D. C.—The Office of Price Administration has made another surrender to the demands of business men greedy for profits.

Over the objections of labor and consumer groups, Administrator Chester Bowles has approved a new pricing system which he says will in part make it impossible for any housewife to know whether she is being gouged or not.

Instead of the dollar-and-cent ceilings which are now in effect for a number of items, the new plan is based upon percentage markup formulas. Prices will be limited only by the requirement that they shall not be higher than average prices during the corresponding period last year.

Only trained inspectors who are permitted to examine a store's books will be able to learn whether the ceilings are being maintained.

The scheme is the "brain child" of the American Retail Federation, which has been battling dollar-and-cent ceilings ever since they were established. It is expected to result in higher prices for most lines of clothing, furniture, jewelry, drugs and other consumer goods usually found in department stores.

These establishments are now making six and a half times more profit than they did in the 1936-1939 period and are doing 60 per cent more business in dollar volume.

Women Hit "Equal Rights" Proposal

Washington, D. C.—Women's organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor unleashed an attack on the so-called Equal Rights Amendment pending before Congress.

Under the guise of granting women workers abstract rights, this amendment would place them at a competitive disadvantage in industry, it was charged.

Adoption of this amendment would jeopardize practically every law on State statute books protecting women in industry and cause endless confusion, it was feared.

Furthermore, the women's organizations agree with organized labor that while the proposed amendment masquerades as a progressive measure, it is really detrimental to the interests of women and to the maintenance of fair social conditions.

The amendment is considered unnecessary because most States are gradually eliminating through corrective legislation, laws that discriminate against women—such as property laws, jury service and others.

ITU VOTES AGAIN ON REAFFILIATION

Indianapolis, Ind.—Acting on petition of 129 local unions, the Executive Council of the International Typographical Union has ordered submitted to a referendum vote on May 17 the question of reaffiliation with the American Federation of Labor, Woodruff Randolph, secretary-treasurer of the ITU, announced.

"It has also been ordered printed on the ballot as a matter of information the action of the 1944 AFL convention guaranteeing complete autonomy of the ITU, as previously agreed on by committees representing both bodies in February, 1941," Mr. Randolph said.

The ITU was suspended by the AFL in 1936. The ITU voted a few months ago on the question of reaffiliation and the proposition was defeated by only 1,225 votes.

AFL Sponsors Post-War Forum

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor announced that it will hold a National Post-War Forum at the Commodore Hotel in New York City on April 12 and 13.

Outstanding national leaders of labor, industry, agriculture and the Government are being invited to attend.

"This forum will be the means of focusing attention on plans to realize the purposes for which we are fighting this war," AFL President William Green said. "As our armies battle on the firing line and our civilian labor force produces the materials to supply the armed forces and to maintain our nation, we must at the same time plan to win the peace. To fall short on any of these fronts is to fall short in winning the war."

The two main topics of the forum will be plans for establishing lasting peace and plans for organizing a post-war economy which will provide jobs for all.

Authorities on special problems will be invited to present their views on basic post-war issues to the conference, in addition to general discussion by those in attendance.

The detailed program for the forum is being arranged by Matthew Woll, chairman of the AFL Post-War Committee.

Mr. Green urged all national and international unions, State Federations of Labor and city central bodies to send representatives to the forum.

Warn Of 8 Million Post-War Jobless Unless Huge Peace Production Starts

Washington, D. C.—The Senate War Contracts subcommittee estimated that 8,000,000 workers will be left jobless when war output ceases and proposed that the country plan now for a $200,000,000,000 post-war prduction program assuring a sound economy and employment for all.

Headed by Sen. James E. Murray of Montana, and including Senators Truman of Missouri and Revercomb of West Virginia, the subcommittee accused the Government of "inefficient and unsatisfactory" handling of terminated contract settlements.

The subcommittee said many contractors "have hesitated or declined to accept new war contracts and have sought civilian production instead" because they were fearful "of being tied up in a lot of red tape in the event of war termination."

The situation "augurs ill for the inevitable period of transition from war to peace," it added.

Commenting on post-war problems, the subcommittee said that 8,000,000 workers would be laid off from war jobs, and that excess supplies in the hands of the Government would total at least $50,000,000,000. In addition, more than 2,500 Government plants, built at an estimated cost of $15,000,000,000, would be released, it said.

"It is clear that the only thing to take the place of the war contracts is the purchasing power of the people and of our fellow nations throughout the world," it said. "To put it another way, all programs intended to adjust our economy to the removal of war contracts, upon which it now rests in large part, must be aimed at developing domestic and foreign markets to a level that has never before been known or dreamed of."

"It is possible for the demobilization program to be planned in such a way that our total output of goods and services during the transition period fails to be less than $135,000,000,000 a year. It is entirely feasible for us to aim at $200,000,000,000 a year or more within five years after the end of the war."

"We Fight For Servicemen," Green Tells Armed Forces

Send Copies To The Armed Forces!

Washington, D. C.—It is vitally important that those serving in the armed forces be advised of the truth regarding labor's war record and its policies with regard to post-war jobs and veterans' legislation.

For this reason we are anxious that copies of AFL President William Green's radio address entitled "Labor Fights For The Serviceman" get into the hands of as many servicemen as possible.

This address has been printed in handy pamphlet form and can be enclosed in letters to those serving in the armed forces here or overseas.

The American Federation of Labor urges every one of its members who has a relative or friend in uniform to send him a copy of this pamphlet. Copies can be obtained free of charge by writing to the American Federation of Labor, Washington, D. C.

Affiliated organizations which would like to send these pamphlets to their members now in the armed forces can also obtain free copies in the same way.

Wounded AFL Soldier Extols Aid Given To Him By The Red Cross

Washington, D. C.—Machine gunned in Sicily and left for dead, Pvt. Carl Cole, member of the Glass Bottle Blowers' Association, AFL, is alive today at Walter Reed General Hospital here because of blood plasma provided by the Red Cross. His story illustrates several of the vital services supplied to American fighting men by the Red Cross, whose nation-wide campaign to raise $200,000,000 during March, is strongly supported by organized labor.

A veteran of five major battles in North Africa, Pvt. Cole was wounded in an engagement near Mt. Aetna. Profusely bleeding from critical head wounds, he walked and dragged himself a distance of three or four miles to a medical aid station. Here he received the plasma which he credits with saving his life.

Cole had seen several of his fellow soldiers get blood plasma, in some cases only 200 yards behind the line of fire. He feels strongly about its value, and the value of other Red Cross operations. "The recruiting of nurses by the Red Cross," he says, "is vital to the Army and to every man in the Army. I have seen these Army nurses working so close to front lines that shells were falling all around them."

Worried at not hearing from her son, Cole's mother, who lives at 104 Caldwell Avenue, Washington, Pa., appealed to her local Red Cross chapter for aid in locating him. She soon received word that he had been wounded, but was on the road to recovery.

Through numerous hospitals in Sicily and North Africa, Pvt. Cole relied on Red Cross hospital workers for letter-writing, books and companionship. "When the plane landed in North Africa, Red Cross workers were on hand to provide hot food and cigarettes," he said.

From North Africa to the United States, Pvt. Cole and other wounded American servicemen traveled by ship to an eastern port; from there by train to Walter Reed Sulphur Springs, W. Va., after treatment there, Cole was transferred to Walter Reed Hospital. There is another operation in store for him, but the same spirit which carried him through the long pull to the field station is with him today, as well as deep appreciation to American civilians who made possible the presence of blood plasma when he needed it.

CIO Leaders Linked With Communists In Expose By Ex-Party Official

New York City.—A former Negro Communist leader, who studied party doctrine at the Lenin School in Moscow and later held high office in the Communist party, revealed that M. J. Quill, head of the Transport Workers' Union (CIO) was an active Communist and that he and other leaders of the CIO attended secret policy-making meetings of the Communist labor council.

The now disillusioned Communist who made the charges was Timothy Holmes, former member of the Communist state committee and the Communist Polburo, and formerly a teacher of party doctrine at the Workers School here. His accusations were attested to in an affidavit made public by "The New York World-Telegram."

He said that Mr. Quill and other CIO leaders reported regularly on confidential union matters to the Communist leadership and took orders from that leadership in the execution of union affairs, even to such questions as the calling of strikes. The internal problems of the unions, the recruiting within the unions of Communist members, and the dealing with anti-Communist elements in the unions, all were discussed with the Communist leadership, according to Mr. Holmes.

He said that Abram Flaxer, president of the State, County and Municipal Workers of America, CIO, was another who attended the secret Communist party meetings.

Although Joseph Curran, president of the National Maritime Union, did not attend party meetings, according to Mr. Holmes, he was regarded as a "dyed-in-the-wool Communist who could always be trusted to go along with party policy." Two of Mr. Curran's aides did, however, report to the Polburo, he asserted. He described meetings of the party which he attended in the presence of Ferdinand Smith, N. M. U. secretary, and Frederick N. Myers, vice-president of the N. M. U.

MONEY ORDERS URGED FOR SERVICEMEN FUNDS

Washington, D. C.—Relatives and friends sending money to members of the armed forces are urged to use United States Post Office Money Orders which may be cashed, upon proper identification, without delay at any Post Office. By sending Money Orders instead of personal checks the serviceman is spared the confusion and embarrassment of finding ways and means to convert the check into cash. This notice is published at the request of the USO.

Labor's Efforts To Help Fighting Men Related In Broadcast

Washington, D. C.—President William Green of the American Federation of Labor told a nation-wide radio audience how labor is fighting for the men in the armed forces.

He declared in an address over the AFL "Labor For Victory" program that labor owes a twin responsibility to the servicemen—first, to produce weapons of war unstintedly; and secondly to "preserve and protect the free American way of life and the high standards that characterize that way of life, so that when our soldiers and sailors return home after the final victory they will have every opportunity to start life anew under favorable circumstances."

"Just as surely as America's fighting forces are outfighting the enemy," Mr. Green said, "America's workers are outproducing the enemy. Together American fighting soldiers and production soldiers constitute an unbeatable team. He who seeks to divide them or set them against each other is an enemy of his own country and a traitor to the cause of democracy."

Mr. Green quoted from the Truman Committee report attesting to the "astounding performance" of labor on the production front. Besides supporting the armed forces in this respect "in our joint and most important task, which is to win the war in the shortest possible time," the AFL leader said, American workers are buying war bonds, contributing to war relief activities, donating to the Red Cross and promoting "every administrative and legislative policy which strengthens the war effort."

Mr. Green then outlined some of labor's activities in behalf of the post-war economic and social security in behalf of the millions of men in uniform who will return to private life when victory comes.

He declared that on the economic front labor's chief battle has been and still is to keep the cost of living in bounds. This helps the serviceman as well as the worker because "the returning serviceman would be hit just as hard by inflation as the civilian."

"Let no one tell you," Mr. Green emphasized, "that labor seeks to profit from the war by obtaining wage increases. Such adjustments as wages as labor demands are for the purpose of maintaining and preserving America's standards of living. Lowering our standard of living is bound to be destroyed if the cost of living keeps going up while wages remain frozen."

The first concern of returning servicemen, Mr. Green said, will be to get a good job. While the law is supposed to provide that they can get their old jobs back after the war, there are many loopholes in it. Organized labor has succeeded in plugging up some of these loopholes, Mr. Green declared, by means of union contracts and union policies which protect the seniority rights of servicemen.

"Those who did not enjoy the benefits of union membership before the war," Mr. Green announced, "will be welcomed into union ranks if they apply and if they are found qualified to serve in the various trades."

He pointed out that the International Association of Machinists has led the way by announcing that ex-servicemen will be admitted into membership without being required to pay initiation fees. Many other unions are following suit, Mr. Green said.

"But even when these protections will be of little avail if a post-war depression hits private industry," Mr. Green continued.

"Therefore, the American Federation of Labor has taken the lead in calling for a vast expansion of public-time production when the war ends.

"Jobs for all," is our post-war slogan. We realize it can only be fulfilled if maximum production is maintained. Labor is joining with industry and the Government in the formulation of post-war programs and policies which will promote all-year-time production and provide jobs for all.

"It would be optimistic, however, to rely entirely on hopes and promises. Therefore, the American Federation of Labor has drafted and caused the introduction in Congress of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill which assumes the entire Social Security program and particularly provides that ex-servicemen will be entitled to at least six months unemployment compensation if they are not able to find jobs immediately on their return. This legislation stands No. 1 on our list and labor will exert every effort to secure its prompt enactment.

"But this is only one of the many protections which labor insists the Government should extend to returning servicemen. We urge that every member of the armed forces should be paid upon demobilization a lump sum adequate enough to permit him to get re-settled in civilian status. We favor grants by the Government to enable those who wish to do so to resume and complete their education. Every possible measure should be taken to provide free hospitalization for disabled veterans, to provide disability compensation for them and to make available to them full opportunity for vocational training so that they can become self-sustaining in the future.

"These are some of the ways in which organized labor is now fighting for the protection of the men in the armed services. I want them to know that labor is actively protecting their interests."